

M

a plan have not yet been clearly identified, nor is there a definite plan completion date.

To address the concerns addressed regarding the potential increased risk of wildfire, one option would be to commit to completing a comprehensive fire management plan prior to opening the area to greater public access. Committing to this would require clear identification of funding and staff, agreement on what a true comprehensive fire plan would include and a schedule for completion. This level of commitment and detail has not yet been reached.

L-95

Montecielo

SPECTACULAR VIEW HOMESITES

November 9, 2001

American River Pump Station Project
Draft EIS/EIR Comments
Surface Water Resources, Inc.
2031 Howe Ave, Suite 110
Sacramento, CA 95825

VIA FACSIMILE AND MAIL

RE: Maidu Drive Neighborhood Information Session
Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2001

The discussions at the above-referred to meeting did not adequately address the many issues and concerns of those attending the meeting, particularly with regard to vehicular traffic, air quality including noise, fire, and public health and safety of those considered to be in the "urban interface" area, or specifically the residential neighborhoods and Skyridge School affected by the Maidu Dr. access proposal. My concerns are relevant for all neighborhoods impacted by a similar proposal.

A

To date, there has been very little publicity with regard to all aspects of the Pump Station Project, especially by the news media and specifically regarding the recreational area and its impacts. This has now created overall skepticism and a loss of credibility for the proponents of the plan. In addition, the recently released DRAFT EIR appears to contain gross understatements.

For example, in the Executive Summary of the EIR Draft, the Transportation and Circulation Section on page 35 states,

"Use of the public river access sites would generate additional seasonal traffic through the area. Roadway capacity and LOS would not be impaired; **however concentrated seasonal travel along Maidu could result in neighborhood concerns. Because few homes front on Maidu Dr., this impact would be less than significant.**" Less than significant! This statement is so negligent to basic issues, and undermines the integrity and accuracy of the rest of the report. I have immediate concerns with regard to the following:

B

1. TRAFFIC

A. Maidu Drive provides access to almost an entirely residential neighborhood, as well as Skyridge Elementary School. The fact that most of the homes do not front on Maidu is totally irrelevant. Most homes in all neighborhoods back up to the main access street and front onto their individual neighborhoods! All of the nearby subdivisions off Maidu Dr. will be greatly impacted by the sight, sound, and air quality of the vehicles accessing the proposed recreational facilities. There will also be a loss of peace and quietness that everyone is entitled to enjoy. The Auburn State Park Recreation Area should have provided the recreational parking and access along time ago, not after the area has been totally developed with residential housing.

Subdivision Site: 580 Riverview Drive • Auburn, CA 95603
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P. 1

A. The public involvement activities including public information sessions and environmental issue scoping for the project are described in the Draft EIS/EIR in Chapter 4.0, Consultation and Coordination, Section 4.2, Public Involvement. As stated therein, the lead agencies have invited public involvement and participation in the planning and environmental review process since 1995. Public notices regarding these opportunities and activities have been provided through local news media as well as the *Federal Register*, as appropriate and required by CEQA and NEPA. Public notice of the availability of the Draft EIS/EIR included publication in the *Federal Register* and media notices in four newspapers of general circulation within the project study area. These publications included: The Sacramento Bee, Auburn Journal, Press Tribune, and The Mountain Democrat. Reclamation also published the Notice of Availability and Notice of Public Meeting in the *Federal Register* on September 10, 2001. Additionally, the public notice provided information regarding the availability of the Draft EIS/EIR for viewing at the lead agencies offices and eight public libraries throughout the study region.

The Draft EIS/EIR was initially circulated for a 63-day public review period (September 10 to November 13, 2001). Reclamation's NEPA handbook requires a 60-day public review period and CEQA requires a 45-day review period. In response to public comments, and other requests, the public review comment period was extended another 30 days and closed on December 13, 2001. The lead agencies provided public notice of the review period extension as required by CEQA and NEPA. The Draft EIS/EIR public review comment period therefore extended 93 days, from September 10, 2001 to December 13, 2001. In addition, since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, lead agency and resource agency personnel have participated in numerous public stakeholder meetings to provide additional information regarding the Proposed Project.

B. The Draft EIS/EIR presented the preliminary information regarding the public river access facilities at the time of document publication (September 2001). Since that time, and in response to public concerns expressed in comment letters, at the October 11, 2001 public meeting, and at various public stakeholder sessions attended by Reclamation and CDPR representatives, the lead agencies, in consultation with CDPR have developed additional specific information related to the design, operations and maintenance of the public river access facilities. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features and Master Response 3.1.9, Fire Management. These modifications have been incorporated into Chapter 2.0, Section 2.2.2, Proposed Project Mid-Channel Diversion Alternative. These changes do not alter the conclusions presented in the Draft EIS/EIR.

American River Pump Station Project
November 9, 2001
Page Two

**B
(cont)**

B. Maidu Dr. dead ends or loops back to the older section of Riverview Dr., which also either dead ends, weaves through other rural streets or leads back through the the Montecielo Subdivision. The point is the road configurations surrounding Maidu Dr. could create real traffic and parking problems outside the proposed park unless more thorough traffic studies and mitigation can be made **prior to a final EIR**, not after.

C. The following traffic impacts have been totally ignored and need to be addressed::

- C** | a. The increased traffic and unknown transient vehicles regarding the safety of children in the Skyridge School area, especially close to the rural area and park.
- D** | b. Off site parking violations and disturbances encroaching into adjacent neighborhoods when the parking lot is full.
- E** | c. Impacts from recreational vehicles, boats, rafts, camping, etc, noise, and possibly bumper to bumper traffic
- F** | d. How will you monitor unsafe and illegal activities which will occur as a result of opening these lands? How will you maintain Maidu Dr. with regard to road debris, maintenance, and all the problems dealing with the recreational public when accessing through a quiet neighborhood?
- G** | e. The entire South Auburn area is almost exclusively residential with very few convenience stores and services. Auburn-Folsom Rd to Douglas Blvd. in Granite Bay is also almost exclusively lower density residential. It seems public park access would be more appropriate near highway service areas and not in established residential areas.
- H** | f. What traffic impacts will occur if rafters decide to use this area over already existing river access sites?
- I** | g. On page 33, the report mentions there will be 54 heavy pieces of construction equipment and 50 workmen during the course of construction. The number of workmen seems to be very low considering the scope of the proposed work. How accurate is that number and corresponding vehicular traffic?
- J** | h. What other existing river access sites were reviewed as less impacting than Maidu Dr?
- K** | 2. **AIR QUALITY.** On pages 35 & 36 the report refers to significant emissions during the construction phase with inconclusive ability to reduce or control the emissions. The suggested Monitoring and documentation procedures as a remedy do not eliminate the problem and is an inadequate solution. The increase from vehicular traffic and emissions from the recreational area are not adequately represented.
- L** | 3. **NOISE.** Noise by increased traffic activities is not adequately addressed in the report.
- M** |

NOV- 9-01 FRI 3:37 PM

P. 2

- C. Additional information regarding the operation and management of the public river access area and how this relates to the proximity of Skyridge Elementary School is provided in Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.
- D. The proposed public river access parking area would be expected to reduce the occurrence of off-site parking that occurs outside of the project area. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.
- E. The proposed public river access would not be anticipated to result in bumper-to-bumper traffic along Maidu Drive or other project study area roadways. Use of the public river access features associated with the Proposed Project would occur under limited hours of operation; no camping would be permitted. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.
- F. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.
- G. The proposed public river access features at the project site were developed by the lead agencies in cooperation with CDPR to mitigate for the anticipated increase in river boating due to rewatering of the North Fork American River near Auburn, California. These facilities provide only an interim solution for a specific need identified by CDPR. Convenience stores and services are located along Auburn-Folsom Road, within one mile from the project area.
- H. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.
- I. The Draft EIS/EIR describes the phasing of proposed construction activities. Construction of the Proposed Project primarily involves extensive earthwork activities to prepare the area for placement of the water supply facilities and to excavate a channel to accommodate flows that currently pass through the bypass tunnel.

The estimate of 54 pieces of heavy construction equipment and 50 workers represents a peak number that would only occur if access road construction, channel excavation, and pumping plant site preparation were to occur simultaneously and then only for a short period. Based on preliminary construction and design phasing, it is more likely that the access road construction and initial rough grading for the river restoration would occur prior to any activity associated with pump station construction, and the number of workers and pieces of equipment evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR represent a conservatively high estimate. The number of trips associated with construction worker travel therefore also is considered conservative; the actual number of trips and related traffic impacts likely would be less than described in the Draft EIS/EIR. Please also refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.

American River Pump Station Project
November 9, 2001
Page Three

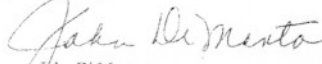
N O 4. **ALTERNATIVES OF THE PLAN.** The other options in the EIR were not discussed in the meeting and merit more discussion. There also seems to be discrepancy between the Federal and State opinions regarding closing the tunnel. This needs further clarification.

The above items only begin to address some of the key issues affecting the neighborhood and which need further study and input before the EIR can accurately represent the impacts of this proposal.

In an effort to stay focused on the solid legitimate impacting issues, I think it would be beneficial for representatives of Placer Water Agency and Bureau of Land Management to work closely with the City of Auburn Dept. of Public Works and Planning Dept., together with the neighborhoods surrounding the proposed project in an effort to mitigate the concerns prior to completing the EIR.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinions.

Sincerely,


John Di Manto
Montecielo Property Owner

cc: City of Auburn Dept. Public Works
City of Auburn, Dept. of Planning
City of Auburn, City Manager
City of Auburn Fire Department
City of Auburn Police Department
Placer County Water Agency
Bureau of Land Management

NOV- 9-01 FRI 3:38 PM

J. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.10, Project Access.

K. The Draft EIS/EIR, Chapter 3.0, Section 3.15, Air Quality, describes potential construction-related air pollutant emissions and the environmental protection measures incorporated into the Proposed Project by the lead agencies to mitigate such impacts to the extent feasible. The determination of appropriate and adequate mitigation for construction-related air quality impacts was done in consultation with local air pollution control districts. Because this element of the mitigation program depends upon site-specific conditions throughout the construction period, some uncertainty remains regarding the level of NO_x emissions, therefore, the Draft EIS/EIR makes a conservative impact statement.

L. Please refer to Response L-3.C.

M. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.

N. The November 7, 2002 meeting referenced by the commenter was a specially-held session to discuss Maidu Drive neighborhood concerns relative to the Proposed Project and the public river access features, in particular. The No Action/No Project Alternative and Upstream Diversion Alternative do not include development of the public river access features. These alternatives are fully described and evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR.

O. The Draft EIS/EIR provides an explanation of the State of California interest in closing the Auburn Dam project bypass tunnel (page 1-5). As described in the Draft EIS/EIR, the Proposed Project would meet this objective of the State of California while also addressing the needs and objectives of the lead agencies, Reclamation (federal) and PCWA (local). The agencies do not agree that there is any discrepancy, both federal and state agencies are interested in remediating the hazards associated with the bypass tunnel. Please also refer to Master Response 3.1.6, Public River Access Features.

L-96



Fax

Cover Sheet

To: Carol Brown

From: Glenn Meeth

Fax Number:

Date: Nov 12, 2001

Number of pages to follow
(don't include cover page):

1

Hello Carol,

I also sent this via Email

Thanks, Glenn

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P. 1

L-96, pg. 2

November 10, 2001

American River Pump Station Project
Draft EIS/EIR Comments
Surface Water Resources, Inc.
2031 How Ave. Suite 110
Sacramento, CA 95825

To whom it may concern;

A

Firstly, I'd like to acknowledge the efforts by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) to close the Auburn Ravine tunnel at the Auburn dam construction site. I think the overall plan is great and will definitely benefit everyone.

B

However, I am concerned with the loss of the Auburn to Cool trail (ACT) as a result of the American River Pump Station Project. The ACT provides the only safe and legal trail for mountain bicyclists to ride between Cool and Auburn. The only other route requires riding on at least 2 miles of State Hwy 49 that has no shoulders and has high traffic speeds.

I'm sure the constructions of a bridge connecting the ACT trail across the North Fork American River will a large cost. I believe a better and lower cost alternative would be the construction of a new trail. There are several alternate routes that could be created. Improving a portion of the WST trail for multiuse with the construction of a small section of a new trail could create one alternate route, for example.

Please consider all or partial funding of a new trail as an alternate mitigation for closing the existing ACT.

Signed,

Glenn Meeth
PO Box 812
Cool, California 95614
gmeeth@yahoo.com

A. Project support noted.

B. Please refer to Master Response 3.1.1, Auburn-to-Cool Trail.